United Nations A/70/215/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 September 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session
Agenda item 20
Sustainable development

Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum*

Overview of activities in Honduras

Framework policies and legislation for sustainable tourism development

1. In 2005, Honduras adopted a national strategy for sustainable tourism covering the period 2006-2021. It has twice been updated. Proposed actions have been defined, as has a catalogue of tourism projects, which includes the creation of a sustainable tourism and climate change observatory in La Ceiba.

2. By Decree No. 266-2013, Honduras put in place a law to optimize public administration, improve services to citizens and strengthen the transparency of government institutions. The law defines the competencies of the Ministry for Economic Development, which include developing public policies relating to tourism, strengthening what the country has to offer tourists, enhancing demand and regulating and supervising the way in which tourism services are presented, in addition to all other aspects aimed at boosting national and international tourism.

3. Moreover, under Executive Decree No. 011-2014, tourism is a priority sector for the country's socioeconomic development and full support is lent to the integration of sustainable tourism.

4. In 2014, the Ministry for Economic Development was defined under Decree No. 18-2014 as the official institution for the promotion of tourism, investment and exports. It is responsible, in coordination with the Honduran Institute of Tourism and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for promoting the development of tourism products at the national level, among other things.

* The information contained in the present addendum was received after the deadline for the submission of the main report.

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5. In August 2013, the Honduran island of Roatán developed an action plan for destination-level sustainability, for which a comprehensive assessment was conducted. The assessment was based on an extensive evaluation of the island's performance in the following five areas relating to sustainability: sustainable tourism planning and governance, economic linkages, preservation of cultural heritage, social and community issues and environmental protection.

6. Furthermore, since March 2015, Honduras has formed part of the "Golden Book" initiative of the World Tourism Organization, aimed at highlighting the country's commitment to sustainable development through tourism.

Enhancing resilience and protection and conservation measures

7. Through Decree No. 151-2009, Honduras established a national legal framework to regulate, among other things, the organization and implementation of a risk management policy in the country.

8. The country has developed a management plan for the Cordelia Bank site of wildlife importance, which is an integral part of the national marine park of the Bay Islands. Various objectives are defined in the plan, including the establishment of an environmental information programme for the general community, fishers, tourism services providers and tourists to encourage their participation in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, among other things.

Improvement of travel facilitation and air connectivity

9. In 2015, an agreement was signed to increase the air connectivity of Honduras, which resulted in the launch of new, low-cost commercial flights between Houston, United States of America, and San Pedro Sula. Moreover, a Canadian charter airline that has been operating flights to the country since 2012 now operates weekly flights from Montreal, Quebec and Toronto to Roatán.

10. The commitment of the Government to fostering sustainable development through tourism has resulted in priority being accorded to infrastructure investment and relevant policy measures at both the national and regional levels. In that context, new airports have been built in Tela, Gracias, Copán and Trujillo and a new international airport is under construction at the Palmerola military base.